

REMARKS

Claims 2-32 are all the claims pending in the application. Applicants amend claims 2, 4, 17, 18, 23, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 31.

Claim rejections

Claims 2, 3-4, 13, 17, 19, 21-23 and 26-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Onda et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,746,333, hereinafter “Onda”) in view of Stamper et al., (U.S. Patent No. 6,820,265, hereinafter “Stamper”) and further in view of Tajiri et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,482,092, hereinafter “Tajiri”). Claims 4-12, 14-16, 18, 20, 24, 25, 27 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Onda, in view of Stamper, in further view of Lee, US Patent No. 6,475, 089). Applicants traverse the rejection for at least the following reasons.

Claim 2

Claim 2 recites, *inter alia*, “wherein the mastery **status** information obtained from the terminal device is accumulated and stored in the distribution device.”

In page 11, lines 6-9 of the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that Onda discloses the features recited above. During the interview conducted on February 11, 2008, Applicant’s representative submitted that Onda does not disclose that the mastery **status** information obtained from the terminal device is accumulated and stored in the distribution device. In response, the Examiner agreed that Onda does not disclose this feature. However, the Examiner now asserts that Stamper allegedly discloses this feature.

Stamper is directed to a method of sharing data between video game programs. Stamper discloses that a processor 12 executes a first program, which is loaded onto the memory 16 before execution. Upon execution of the first program, information pertaining to the first program is stored in the memory 16 (column 4, lines 6-17). Moreover, Stamper discloses that after the execution of the first program, the processor 12 and the memory 16 are used to execute a second program. If the processor 12 determines that there is information previously stored by the first video game program, the second program retrieves data and uses the information as need by the processor 12 during the implementation of the remaining instructions of the second program (column 5, lines 1-56).

Applicants respectfully submit that Stamper discloses a single system that has a processor and memory; it does not disclose a terminal device and a distribution device as recited in claim 2. Moreover, the processor executes a first program and stores information pertaining to the programs in memory and retrieves the stored information from memory when executing a second program. However, Stamper does not disclose obtaining mastery status information from the terminal device and accumulating and storing the information on a distribution device. That is, Stamper merely discloses that the information pertaining to a first program is stored in the memory of the same device; it does not disclose mastery status information being obtained from a first device (terminal device) and being accumulated and stored in a second device (distribution device).

Specifically, in column 8, lines 35-57, Stamper discloses that a player must recognize from the hint that the door to access is found in the second video game, and thus, this hint requires the player recall playing the secondary video game. Moreover, if the user wants to use this hint found in the second video game he also has to reach a certain level in the current game.

(column 8, lines 48-53). Therefore, Stamper merely discloses hints from a second game can be used in a current program, if a certain level was reached in the current game; it does not disclose anything about accumulating and storing mastery status information in the distribution device that was obtained from the terminal device.

Furthermore, Applicants respectfully submit that Stamper discloses a single processor in the game system; it does not disclose a game mastery support apparatus and a terminal apparatus each comprising a processor. Also, Stamper does not disclose that the terminal apparatus from which the mastery information is obtained from and the game mastery support apparatus which comprises the distribution device, which accumulates and stores the mastery status information, are different.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that, Stamper does not disclose wherein the mastery status information obtained from the terminal device is accumulated and stored in the distribution device. Onda and Tajiri also do not disclose the features missing in Stamper. In other words, considering what the claim as a whole requires and what each reference teaches or suggests, and without hindsight picking or choosing particular elements from the prior art, Onda, Tajiri and Stamper do not teach or fairly suggest all the features of claim 2.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that claim 2 is allowable over the cited references.

Claims 4, 17, 18, 23, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 31

Applicants respectfully submit that since claims 4, 17, 18, 23, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 21 recite subject matter analogous to claim 2 and since Lee does not cure the deficiency noted above with

regard to claim 1, these claims are also allowable for at least for the similar reasons claim 2 is allowable.

Dependent claims

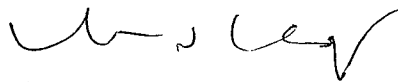
Applicants respectfully submit that claims that depend from the above independent claims should be patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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